

family and friends, people who have supported his cause, and perhaps most of all, Robert.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating this father who has given so much of himself.

HOUSE DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE COMMISSION RESOLUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 14, 2005

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this legislation. We have absolutely no constitutional authority to establish a commission to "assist" parliaments throughout the world. Despite all the high-sounding rhetoric surrounding this legislation, we should not fool ourselves. This is nothing more than yet another scheme to funnel United States tax dollars to foreign governments. It is an international welfare scheme and an open door to more U.S. meddling in the internal affairs of foreign countries.

How can we tell an American family struggling to pay its bills that it must pay more taxes so a foreign parliament can purchase fancy plasma screen televisions, or the latest computer equipment, or ultra-modern communications equipment? Can anyone here justify this?

Mr. Speaker, this bill will do more than just take money from Americans. This commission will enable members of Congress and congressional staff employees to travel the world meddling in the affairs of foreign governing bodies. It is counterproductive to tell other nations how they should govern themselves, as even if we come loaded with dollars to hand out, our meddling is always resented by the local population—just as we would resent a foreign government telling us how to govern ourselves. Don't we have enough of our own problems to solve without going abroad in search of foreign parliaments to aid?

I urge my colleagues to reject this wasteful and counterproductive scheme.

THE RADIOPROTECTANT PROCUREMENT ACT OF 2005

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2005

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Radioprotectant Procurement Act of 2005. This bill directs the Departments of Health and Human Services and Homeland Security to review all potentially viable radiation countermeasures and to move toward procurement of those which the government deems safe and effective against a nuclear or radiological attack.

The threat of a radiological or nuclear attack is one of the gravest faced by the United States. The results of such an attack could be catastrophic, causing death, widespread radiation sickness, economic hardship and at the very least, tremendous strain on public health resources. These effects could be mitigated if the proper radiation countermeasures are rapidly administered.

Currently, the medical options for responding to acute radiation exposure are very limited. Decontamination of individuals through showering and changing clothes is currently the main tool we have to "treat" large numbers of actual or suspected casualties. But this does little to prevent or mitigate the radiation sickness caused by initial radiation exposure or radioactive fallout.

The good news is that there are a number of drugs and other medical countermeasures that have the potential to counteract the health effects of radiation exposure. The Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute is now testing at least one product that might actually slow or stop the destruction of bone marrow caused by radiation and resulting diminution of the body's immune system—a leading cause of sickness and death from irradiation. Unfortunately, no such radioprotectants are stockpiled in amounts adequate enough to be effective against large-scale nuclear or radiological attacks.

In 2004, President George W. Bush signed into law the Project Bioshield Act of 2004, authorizing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct and support research and development of effective countermeasures. The Radioprotectant Procurement Act seeks to accelerate these efforts, as every day that passes without progress in obtaining a needed countermeasure is another day that we remain vulnerable against that threat.

If we can give people a drug that will keep them alive and healthy after being exposed to high levels of radiation, then I think we should do everything we reasonably can to get that drug purchased and distributed as quickly as possible.

The bill I am introducing today calls upon the Federal Government to do just that, and to move as expeditiously as possible in this regard. I look forward to continuing to work with the Administration and my colleagues in this body to make sure that these new and innovative medical countermeasures continue to be responsibly but quickly developed, tested, and stockpiled. The American people deserve nothing less.

Thank you Mr. Speaker and I ask my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring and enacting this important bill.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION AGAINST THE CANADIAN SEAL HUNT

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2005

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I join many of my colleagues and 8.5 million members of the Humane Society of the United States in designating March 15th as the International Day of Action Against the Canadian Seal Hunt. Across the world in 50 cities, citizens will be coming together at Canadian Embassies and Consulates to call for an end to the horrific slaughter of harp and hooded seals.

The Canadian seal hunt season runs from November 15th to May 15th and occurs off the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador. Anyone with a commercial sealing license or provincial hunting license can take part in the seal hunt.

The Canadian government has authorized the killing of over 300,000 seals this year alone, and 975,000 from 2003–2005. They have also helped to pay for this hunt with \$20 million in subsidies provided to the sealing industry between 1995 and 2001. While there are quotas in place, they are not enforced by the government. According to the Humane Society of the United States the number of seals killed in 2002 surpassed the quota by more than 37,000 seals, and in 2004, by nearly 16,000. These numbers do not take into account the number of seals who were wounded and perished later.

While this season's seal hunt opened on November 15, 2004, the bulk of the killings will begin taking place in the next few weeks as new seal pups are born. These new seal pups are called "beaters" by the hunters. While hunters do kill adult seals, an estimated 95 percent of those killed are twelve days to twelve months old. These seals, who are either clubbed or shot to death, are killed primarily for their skins.

In 1991, an independent team of veterinarians found that the seal hunt did not adhere to Canada's animal welfare regulations. Most disturbing of their findings is that 42 percent of the seals they studied had likely been skinned alive while conscious. This high percentage of live skinning alone is a disturbing number, but combined with the other details of the seal hunt it is clear that it is time for an end to this practice.

The Canadian fishing industry claims that the seal hunt needs to continue because they eat too many cod and adversely impact the fish population. However, two Canadian government marine scientists have stated clearly that the true cause of cod depletion was over fishing. They also noted that, "the consensus among the international community is that seals are not responsible for the collapse in cod stocks."

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans Minister hailed the seal hunt by saying it will harvest "a valuable natural resource." Harp and hooded seals are not a natural resource, but animals that should not have to endure the suffering inflicted through the government authorized seal hunt.

I join with not only the Humane Society of the United States, but also with Greenpeace, Nova Scotia Humane Society and the World Society for the Protection of Animals, among many other organizations, in calling for the Canadian government to end this barbaric and inhumane practice.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2005

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 14, 2005, I was unable to cast my floor vote on rollcall Nos. 66, 67, and 68. The votes I missed include rollcall No. 66 on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 135, providing for the establishment of a commission in the House of Representatives to assist parliaments in emerging democracies; rollcall No. 67 on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 101, urging the European Union to add Hezbollah to the European